

## Second Ward September/October 2013 E-newsletter

### News from Cam Gordon

#### Council Member, Second Ward

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/ward2>

**Tree Roundtable.** I have organized a Roundtable Discussion about the threats and opportunities facing our urban tree canopy, for **October 7**, 7-8:30pm, at Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave S. We will discuss the tree loss from this summer's storm, Emerald Ash Borer, the importance of watering trees, and the Longfellow Trees program. You can find out more about Longfellow Trees here: <http://www.longfellow.org/trees/>.

**Municipal Election.** I have been asked by many constituents for more information about the upcoming municipal election. There are some good resources for people looking to do more research about candidates, especially for mayor. Minneapolis E-Democracy has compiled a list of all of the candidates running for office in Minneapolis, along with links to their contact information, their websites and other information about them, which you can find here: [http://pages.e-democracy.org/Minneapolis\\_elections](http://pages.e-democracy.org/Minneapolis_elections). Our local Second Ward community radio station, KFAI, has recorded interviews with many, if not all, of the 35 candidates available at their website, <http://kfai.org/news/62>. Additionally there are several mayoral forums coming up including:

Oct. 8 – 6-8pm – Northside Forum – Folwell Park Gym, 1615 N. Dowling Ave. –

Oct. 9 – KFAI Debate – Details TBD

Oct. 15 – 7-8:30pm – Transportation Forum, Humphrey School, 301 19th Ave S # 307

Oct. 16 – 7-8:30pm – League of Women Voters Forum - Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall

Oct. 17 – 7-8:30pm – Minneapolis American Indian Mayoral Forum - NACDI, 1414 East Franklin Ave.

Oct. 23 – 7-8:30pm – Urban Ag Forum – Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th St # 200,

Oct. 24 – 10am-Noon – Public Housing Forum – Details TBD

Oct. 29 – 7:30-9pm – WCCO Radio Forum – Details TBD

Oct. 30 – Time TBD - Theater of Public Policy Forum - Bryant Lake Bowl, 810 W. Lake St.

Nov. 1 – Noon - MPR Forum - Westminster Presbyterian Church on Nicollet Mall in downtown \

For more information you can also check out: <http://www.southwestjournal.com/elections/calendar>

**Absentee Voting Has Begun.** The City of Minneapolis is gearing up for the Nov. 5 municipal election, which will be city's second election to use ranked-choice voting. Candidate filing for the election is now closed, so voters can see who will be on the ballot in November by visiting the elections website: [vote.minneapolismn.gov](http://vote.minneapolismn.gov). Voters who will not be able to vote at their polling place on Election Day are eligible to vote by absentee ballot. Voting absentee can be done in person at City Hall, or entirely by mail. If a voter chooses to cast an absentee ballot in person, that can be done beginning September 20 during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or on the final two Saturdays before Election Day, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. To vote absentee by mail, voters may request a ballot now. Ballots will be mailed out beginning Sept. 20, and will include everything a voter needs to send back a completed ballot. Visit [vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/absentee](http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/voters/absentee) for absentee ballot applications in multiple languages that can be printed out and mailed in to request a ballot. Also online is a link to the Secretary of State's absentee ballot lookup tool to follow the status of an absentee ballot that has been submitted. Voters who are not pre-registered can still vote absentee. If voting by mail, voter registration materials will be sent with the absentee ballot for voters who are not already registered.

**City Adopts Energy Vision.** The city has articulated a new strong, future-focused Energy Vision, which you can read here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-113830.pdf>. This document makes clear the sort of energy system the City would like to see in 2040: clean, reliable, affordable and with lots of local energy production and local economic benefit. This is a great start, and I look forward to using the opportunity we have next year – both at the State Legislature and through our energy franchise negotiations – to put us on a better path to making this vision a reality.

**City Comments on Sherco.** The Council has submitted comments on Xcel Energy's Sherco coal-fired power plant. We are asking the PUC to compel Xcel to begin the planning process for replacing Sherco with cleaner, less polluting sources.

**Community Solar Filing.** Xcel Energy has complied with the state law that requires them to put in place a community solar program by filing their proposed plan with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission just before the September 30 deadline. Community solar is a program that allows people to invest in and benefit from solar panels that are not on their own property. The idea is to allow, for example, homeowners with shady yards to partner with nearby commercial property owners on solar installations, and pay off that investment over time. Unfortunately, Xcel's community solar plan leaves much to be desired. First, Xcel is proposing pay only 10.1 cents per kilowatt-hour for solar power. This ignores the many benefits of solar – it produces during typical peak times (summer days, when people are running their air conditioners), does not add to the load on the transmission system (most solar goes on the grid in the distribution system, after the electrical transformers that are the key limit on the amount of power available), and has little to no transmission loss, because it is generated so close to the end user. Solar installers are already making clear that most community solar projects cannot work at this rate, meaning that Xcel seems to have designed the program to fail. Second, there is a 20-megawatt cap on the amount of community solar that can be installed in one year in the whole state of Minnesota. While that may sound like a lot, in the unlikely event that every single project was in Minneapolis, it would still take more than a decade to reach the Climate Action Plan goal of having 10% of our electricity come from local sources. I plan on working on a response to this unimpressive filing by Xcel with City sustainability staff, solar industry experts and my colleagues.

**Trap Neuter Return Ordinance.** The Trap-Neuter-Return ordinance I authored has passed the Council. The purpose of this ordinance is to humanely and effectively reduce the populations of feral cats in Minneapolis by partnering with nonprofits that spay or neuter feral cats and return them to their environments.

**Violent Crime in Ward 2.** In late September there was a disturbing increase in violent crime incidents in and around the Second Ward in the last few weeks. A young man from Saint Paul was shot and killed near the Blue Nile restaurant on Franklin Avenue in Seward on September 28<sup>th</sup>. His alleged murderer, Cedric Chappell, has been arrested, and it sounds like the case against him is strong. A stabbing took place at a rental property near 18<sup>th</sup> Ave SE and Talmage SE in Southeast Como, as the result of a fight. Most recently, on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at about 2am, a man was shot four times near the Nomad World Pub on Cedar Avenue in Cedar Riverside. In the weeks ahead I will be working closely with neighborhood associations, nearby neighbors and our staff from the police, regulatory services and business licensing to increase patrols and develops strategies to prevent these types of incidents in the future.

**New First Precinct Inspector.** First Precinct Inspector Bryan Schafer is leaving the Minneapolis Police Department for a new position as Chief of the Hastings Police Department. I have appreciated working with Bryan as head of the First and Second Precincts, and as the former head of the Juvenile Unit, and wish him the best in his new position. Police Chief Janee Harteau has appointed Medaria Arradondo, a 24-year veteran of the Minneapolis Police Department, to take his place leading the first precinct. Inspector Arradondo started his career with the MPD in 1989 working as a Public Housing Enforcement officer and School Liaison Officer. In 1997, he was promoted to Sergeant and worked in investigations, Internal Affairs and served as the assistant to the Chief of Police. In 2003, he was promoted to Lieutenant and oversaw the Federal Mediation Agreement, served as Public Information Officer, acting Inspector of the Second Precinct and worked many years in the Fourth Precinct. In December 2012, Arradondo was appointed as Commander of the Internal Affairs Unit.

**Power Breed Policy.** The Council has unanimously adopted a new policy on adopting large, and so called "power breed," dogs. This represents a large number of dogs that we take in like pit bulls and Rottweilers. When implemented later next year, it will allow Animal Care and Control to adopt out more of these dogs to good homes if they pass a behavioral assessment. This policy is likely to substantially reduce the number of dogs euthanized by the City, as 45% of dogs euthanized last year belonged to power breeds. The Council will have to increase the funding for Animal Care and Control by about

\$50,000 per year to pay for the behavioral assessments, but we may also save money in the long term by not having to house as many dogs for as long a time. I was very supportive of this policy change, and appreciate the focus by Animal Care and Control on reducing the number of animals they put down each year.

**Youth Violence Prevention Plan Revised.** On October 9<sup>th</sup> the Public Safety, Civil Rights and Health committee will consider approving a revised and updated youth violence prevention plan, Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence. You can find the report, full plan and presentation on the committee's agenda (item 5) here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/psch/WCMS1P-102603>. This is a revision of the plan approved in 2008, resulting from over a year of work started in 2012, and reflects input from local youth, adults, families, and neighborhood service providers and a workgroup which included experts in youth violence prevention and youth development representing more than 60 youth serving providers as well as private businesses and government agencies. The 2013 Blueprint has five goals and includes existing and new activities informed by public health principles and aligned with the National Forum framework of prevention, early intervention, re-entry and enforcement. I am considering amending the plan at the committee to add to our activities under the objective, "Decrease youth access to guns," working for better gun regulations and enforcement of those taught currently exist. Additionally, the City is currently seeking a new Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator to continue to move this important work forward.

**One Minneapolis – One Read.** One Minneapolis One Read, a community read where everyone in Minneapolis is invited to read the same book and join the conversation, is hosting a gallery reception on Monday, **October 7**, from 5-6:30pm at the Hennepin County Government Center, Public Service (skyway) level, 300 S 6th Street. This year's book is "A Choice of Weapons" by Gordon Parks. Parks, a photographer for Life magazine, writer, composer, artist, and filmmaker, was 16 when he moved from Kansas to Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1928. At the reception you can meet Robin Hickman, great-niece of Gordon Parks; Wing Young Huie, author of the book's foreword and photographer; and Steve Floyd, photographer. The event will be hosted by Hennepin County Commissioner Gail Dorfman and Minneapolis City Council Member John Quincy and is sponsored by the Hennepin County Board, Hennepin County Libraries, Minneapolis Public Schools and the City of Minneapolis. See [www.oneminneapolisonearead.com](http://www.oneminneapolisonearead.com) for more One Minneapolis One Read events.

**Minneapolis Residents Walk and Bike More.** The Census has released 2012 data on bicycling and walking in Minneapolis, and there's great news. In 2012, **6.9%** of Minneapolis residents walked to work, up from 5.8% in 2011. And **4.5%** of Minneapolis residents biked to work. This is up from 3.4% in 2011 and marks the largest percentage of Minneapolis residents biking to work since records have been kept. We have regained our place as the second-highest city in the nation – after Portland, OR – in terms of the percentage of trips made by bike. But while this is welcome news, this new mode share is still less than a third of the 15% biking goal the Council recently adopted as part of the Climate Action Plan. We have to do more, and one of the best ideas out there for increasing bike ridership is to build protected, separated bikeways that are safer and more comfortable for all types of people.

**Responsible Banking Ordinance.** The Council has approved Member Glidden's changes to the City's responsible banking ordinance that require financial institutions that provide banking services to the City to publicly disclose an expanded set of information about their lending practices and policies each year. The newly expanded ordinance will create greater transparency and allow the public a clearer view of how banks that handle public dollars operate in our community. The Council can also use the information when selecting financial service providers. The ordinance requires financial institutions to publicly share information by July 1 of each year on loan modifications and foreclosures on residential mortgages on properties located within the city, as well as numbers and amounts of loans given to small businesses, among other data. Commercial banks that provide banking services will also be required to file a Community Reinvestment Plan every two years that describes current and proposed initiatives to address the financial needs of the city and its residents and businesses. Minneapolis is the tenth city in the country to adopt a responsible banking ordinance. I supported this and will be very interested in seeing how we will use it to help us do a better job of holding financial institutions accountable.

**Help Water Trees.** Minneapolis yard and boulevard trees still need an inch of water every week throughout the fall. Extremely dry conditions followed the spring and early summer rainfall that drenched the city and caused significant damage, and the lack of precipitation now is causing stress on the City's urban forest. Lack of water can make trees vulnerable to insects and disease and cause permanent damage to young and old trees alike. Trees up to five years old are especially susceptible. In any week that it rains less than one inch, yard and boulevard trees need to be watered. The Park Board plants and mulches boulevard trees but relies on residents or businesses nearby to water them. An effective way for residents to water a tree is to turn on a slow stream of water (just so the hose is weeping) for a few hours.

**Apply for Homegrown Food Council.** The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council seeks new members to help get more healthy food into the community. The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council works to support all Minneapolis residents and increase access to quality food, address hunger and food insecurity, connect sectors of the food system, influence policy and decision-making, and ensure an environmentally sustainable and socially just food system. The application deadline is Oct. 18. The application is available in English and Spanish at [www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings). Homegrown Minneapolis is a citywide initiative expanding our community's ability to grow, process, distribute, eat and compost more healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. Find more information about Homegrown Minneapolis at [www.minneapolismn.gov/homegrown](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/homegrown).

**Streetcars.** The City Council, with my support, has voted to recommend the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Nicollet-Central Transit Corridor be modern streetcar running between Lake Street and at least 5th Street NE on Nicollet Avenue, Nicollet Mall and Hennepin/1st Avenues, using the Hennepin Avenue Bridge to cross the Mississippi River. While I have some concerns about the funding and the high cost of building the line I am excited to see the potential of bringing streetcars back to Minneapolis being realized.

**Residential Density Amendment Passes.** The proposed amendment to change the way residential density is regulated where higher density multi-family uses are allowed has passed the Council. This change eliminates the requirement of a minimum lot area per dwelling unit in all districts except for the low- and medium-density residence districts: R1, R2, R3, and R4. This amendment would add flexibility and would eliminate a built-in disincentive to incorporate smaller dwelling units into multi-family developments. Nothing in this amendment will allow additional building height or bulk in any zoning district. For more on this, see the Second Ward blog.

**Waste Hauling Contract.** The Council has contracted with Minneapolis Refuse, Inc. (MRI) for garbage, recycling and related services for the half of the city served by private haulers. The contract runs until 2017, with the option of two one-year renewals.

**Southwest LRT Recommendation for the Minneapolis Segment.** The Metropolitan Council will host a public open house on Thursday, October 10, 2013 to receive public input on the project office's draft recommendation for the scope and basic design which proposes to co-locate the light rail, freight rails and bike paths along the Kenilworth trail by constructing two tunnels for the light rail line on either side of the Kenilworth lagoon, of the Southwest LRT (METRO Green Line Extension) project in Minneapolis. I was glad to see that this plan preserves all homes and businesses along its path. I, and the Council, already voted to approve this alignment provided the freight trains were relocated. So while I support building out our light rail network I am disappointed to see this provision removed and will be studying this carefully in the weeks ahead before it comes to the Council for municipal consent.

**'Who should run Minneapolis?'** On Wednesday, October 9, 6:30-7:30pm I will be sitting on a panel at Minneapolis Community and Technical College discussing 'Who should run Minneapolis?' Truth to Tell, the Community Development Club and the Center for Civic Engagement at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College will be presenting this televised public forum. This event is free and open to the public to attend and participate. Light refreshments will be served. Additional distribution will come on TruthToTell's regular air slot at 9:00 AM on October 14 on KFAI, and on television at 8:00 PM on October 14 on SPNN St. Paul Cable Channel 19, and MTN Minneapolis Cable Channel 16. Subsequent broadcasts will also be available to northern metro suburban cable subscribers and online.

**Light Timing Improvement.** The last week of October Public Works staff will retiming many of the signals in South Minneapolis area of Ward 2. Signal retiming will take place all over the city throughout the next four to five months. Staff will be in the field to verify that the new signal timing plans run as expected and will likely be making some changes to the new plans as they move forward. If you have question of concerns feel free to call me or 311.

**University Alliance Meeting with Head of Reg Services.** University District Alliance members and people working on livability issues in the University area are set to meet with Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, the new head of the City's Department of Regulatory Services, on October 8<sup>th</sup>. This is a great opportunity for a new department head to hear about the University area's most pressing livability issues, and I'm very glad it's happening.

**22 on the River Project.** Bianca Fine, of Fine Associates, has purchased the Good Samaritan property on 27th Avenue near East River Road and Franklin Ave. I have met with her and have encouraged her to meet with the neighborhood. I understand that they are finalizing some plans and renderings and Aaron Roseth, their lead architect, has already started conversations with PPERRIA committee members. As she explained it to me, her intention is not to convert the building into student housing, but to do "a complete upgrade of the building into a high-quality multifamily residential community." Fine Associates does have a track record in Minneapolis and you can find out a little more about them at their website <http://www.fineassociates.com/>. Typically they build and then manage their properties over the long term. They are also currently working on a project in the Cedar Riverside area. The work that is occurring now is to remove any asbestos from the property. This will take about four months. The company doing this work, Envirobate, is one of the most respected companies in this business. I understand that there are neighborhood concerns about the parking impact of this project, and I have shared those concerns with Fine Associates.

**University Area Parking Task Force.** The University District Alliance has set up a task force to look at changing the parking requirements for residential development in the University Area Overlay. I have introduced this due to concerns I have heard from folks from the U area about some of the ordinance's unintended consequences. John Kari, from Prospect Park, has agreed to chair the task force. The current regulation requires at least one off street parking stall for every 2 bedrooms, or one per dwelling unit (whichever is greater) in any new development. We are considering loosening up on this requirement in some cases and I want to make sure the issue gets fully vetted and influenced by all the views of our University partners who helped create the overlay district.

**Minnehaha Avenue.** Hennepin County has decided to move forward with a bike lane design for Minnehaha Avenue. At this point, I am not prepared to vote for municipal consent for this project, because the County has not done an even-handed comparison between the bike lane layout and a protected bikeway layout. The last protected bikeway layout presented to the public includes the unnecessary removal of around fifty trees and fifty parking spaces. Given the reactions at all three public meetings that have occurred so far – all of which I or my staff have attended – and the petitions that have been signed by almost a thousand Minnehaha road users, it is clear to me that there is strong public desire for a cycletrack and strong public concern about tree and parking loss. It is clear to me that County staff decided early in this process that they would not support a protected bikeway, and nothing that has happened since has had any appreciable effect on that position. You can read more on the second ward blog.

**Improvements to Hiawatha Crossings.** Hennepin County, the City and MNDOT are developing a plan to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities at six intersections along Hiawatha Avenue between 28th Street and 46th Street. The enhancements will include ADA improvements, radius and median adjustments to reduce crossing distances and revisions to the signal systems to accommodate the construction.



**WaHu Project.** The WaHu project at Washington and Huron can now move forward, because the CSL Blood Plasma facility is being relocated to a site at 304 East Lake Street. I was supportive of this move, which allows this neighborhood-supported project to move forward.

**Surly Brewery.** The Surly development has been approved by the Planning Commission. They have received approval for two variances, to reduce the number of parking spaces required and to increase the maximum size of food and beverage uses over 5,000 square feet in an industrial district. I am very supportive of this project.

**New Restaurants in Stadium Village.** The City Council's Regulatory Committee has approved liquor licenses for two new restaurants in the stadium village area. With final Council approval likely to occur later this week, Dino's Fresh Med Grill at 856 Washington Ave. and the Haiku Japanese Bistro at 620 Washington Ave. will be granted class "E" licenses and be permitted to serve wine and strong beer as part of their restaurants businesses. A Class "E" license allows the license holder to have radio, TV, jukebox, or electronically reproduced music but live entertainment is not permitted.

**True Thai.** True Thai restaurant has found a way to pay the unpaid taxes that were putting its license in jeopardy, and has retained the license.

**25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> S-Curve.** I have presented the issue of the 25th/26th Ave S-curve to the Engineering Subcommittee of the Minneapolis Pedestrian Advisory Committee. They agreed that the status quo is a problem, and will be looking into it further.

**Cedars Rising Now Open.** I was delighted to share in the grand opening of Touchstone's Cedar's Rising, the newest housing development in the neighborhood. Not only is this a one-of-a-kind develop custom-designed to serve a specific type of resident, but it is a good example of how an engaged community and a cooperative development team can lead to a successful project. You can learn more about this unique housing opportunity in the neighborhood here: <http://www.touchstonemh.org/programs-and-services/rising-cedar-apartments>.

**Gluek's Tied House/Rainbow Gallery Building.** On a 5-4 vote, the Heritage Preservation Commission has denied the application by Fine Associates to demolish the Rainbow Gallery / Gluek's Tied House at 6<sup>th</sup> St S and 15<sup>th</sup> Ave S. I fully expect this decision to be appealed to the City Council. This has been appealed to the City Council, and there will be a public hearing on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Currie Park Flats (Five15 on the Park) TIF Plan.** People may review and comment on the proposed Currie Park Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan and the related Currie Park Redevelopment Plan and Modification No. 8 to the Cedar-Riverside Urban Renewal Plan at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/public/index.htm>. The plans have been prepared to facilitate the already approved development of Five15 on the Park, a 259-unit mixed-income transit-oriented rental housing project with approximately 5,000 square feet of ground-level neighborhood-serving commercial space in a new six-story building at the intersection of 6th Street South and 15th Avenue South in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood and West Bank area of Minneapolis. The City Council can approve, amend or reject the proposed plans after consideration of comments received. It is anticipated that the Plans will be the subject of a public hearing of the City Council's Community Development Committee at approximately 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 19, 2013 in Room 317 City Hall. The full City Council is expected to consider the Plans at its meeting on Friday, December 6, 2013. Comments are due on Monday, November 18, 2013. If you or your organization would like to meet to discuss the proposed Plans, if you would like paper copies, or if you have questions, please contact: Matt Goldstein, Multifamily Housing Finance Specialist, Residential Finance, CPED, (612) 673-5075, [matt.goldstein@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:matt.goldstein@minneapolismn.gov)

**Apply to Serve on a Boards or Commission.** There are openings on the Arts Commission, Board of Appeal and Equalization, Civil Rights Commission, Disabilities Advisory Committee, Ethical Practices Board, Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council, Housing Board of Appeals, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, Telecommunications Network (MTN),

Minneapolis, and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).

**Ward Office Hours.** Every Tuesday morning I hold “Office Hours” in the Ward from 9:30-11:00am. Please feel free to call for an appointment or just stop by.

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays, Hard Times Café (West Bank/University);

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays, Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como (SE Como);

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, Pratt School (Prospect Park);

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, the Birchwood Cafe (Seward/Longfellow).

**Cam Gordon**

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